

## CONSTRUCTION AND MODELLING OF THE PROXIMITY POLICE OPERATOR'S COMPETENCES

### **Model of the proximity policeman's competences**

#### 1. Theoretical references:

The distinctive competences of a professional role consist of technical and relational skills to which proficient behaviour and performance are associated (Boyatsis).

The understanding and specification of key role competences in an organization represents the most advanced method proposed by management sciences to guide the whole human resource management system and in particular, policies and processes of programming and recruitment, training and career development. There are diverse specific existing methodologies for defining the skills of a distinctive organizational role but, in our case, the preferred methodological solution adopted is that of establishing the distinctive role competences through the analysis of the major job processes (Hammer and Champy) rather than through defining the officially assigned responsibilities. This choice was made in the belief that it enables a better understanding of the contextual organisational conditions that characterize a specific professional role requiring the skills subject of analysis. In order to define the model design guidelines for general and common training courses (for the distinctive development of the Proximity policeman's skills) it appears necessary, within the adopted theoretical and methodological framework, to specify the characteristic of the Proximity Policeman's job processes.

In the light of considerations made in the first part of this work and, therefore, on the basis of the close connection that has emerged from the analysis of the different regulatory frameworks of the member countries between the Local and the Proximity Police Force services we propose the principal organizational processes of a local police station in which the service of proximity policing is implemented.

## **2. Analysis of the processes that characterize the Proximity police**

The work processes of a local administrative police station can be grouped into the following 5 macro categories of activity which refer to the respective institutional competences previously described.

Activities:

1. Managerial – organizational (internal);
2. Administrative police;
3. Crime and public security police;
4. Traffic police;
5. Proximity police.

### **Managerial-directional-organizational activities (internal)**

In this category of activity are grouped all the organisational processes implemented to ensure the proper functioning of police station together with career management and development:

#### **a) Programming**

Collection and analysis of statistical data for the pre-determination of objectives, policies and activities to be accomplished within a certain period of time;

#### **b) Management and coordination of services**

In a public service like the Municipal Police Force, management represents the set of actions that the police corps implements in order to pursue its objectives and make choices concerning relations between its constituent elements (people and technologies);

#### **c) Organization and Management of Human Resources**

To this group of processes belong the organisation of work and the definition of internal procedures, personnel management and safety at work management.

#### **d) Secretariat**

Secretariat management in every public or private administration represents the pivotal job for the construction of an excellent work performance with:

- Commander's secretariat
- Public relations office
- Front-office: dealing with people asking for information, advice, receiving petitions, complaints, reports, delivery and withdrawal of documents, collecting receivables (payment of fines) and secretarial rights
- Relations with the State, regional, provincial and local authorities,
- Legal representation of rights and public interests
- Organizing meeting
- Press and public relations service

#### **e) General Affairs**

This service is responsible for the management of ordinary activities such as:

- Recording activity (incoming and outgoing mail)
- Treasurer's office

#### **f) Accounting**

The accounting service is without doubt the system core business through which the following is carried out

- Expenditure commitments
- Payments

#### **g) Information system management**

The advent of IT and globalisation has raised the issue of new ways of managing activities that consist in:

- Website implementation and management

- Software management
- Management communications interfaces

### **Administrative police Activities**

In this category of activity are grouped all work processes relating to licensing, conducting inspections and applying sanctions.

#### **a) Repression of deviant behaviour**

- Rescue activities
- Collaboration with representatives of: the municipal administration, volunteer groups, local hospitals, clinics, essential services, road and traffic safety organizations, private operators who have the means and tools, communications and assistance operators for the development and implementation of civil protection intervention schemes (seismic risk - hydro-geological - chemical - health - industrial;

#### **b) Certifications**

- Ascertaining of personal identity and domicile
- Occupation certifications
- Issuing of permits for occupation of public spaces and for the vending of food-stuffs
- Billboards (electoral and commercial)

#### **c) Tax evasion**

- Ascertaining of evasion of local taxes

#### **d) Monitoring of building activities**

- Monitoring of building sites
- Monitoring compliance with work anti-accident rules
- Monitoring compliance with work safety rules

- Monitoring compliance with the local urban planning rules and the regional and national laws (Control on compliance with the seismic and environmental requirements and on the intended use of property).

#### **e) Commercial Sector**

Authorizations, complaints, starting new activities, licenses and permits.  
Measures related to:

- Lifts and hoists
- Hoists for only things
- Platform lifts for disabled
- Car rental (garages)
- Car with driver service
- Agencies (funeral parlours, car handling practices, etc.)
- Radio low frequency communications equipment
- Trade of second hand and antique goods
- Festivals, public happenings (measures of public safety for amusement parks, dances, travelling shows and crafts, music playing and singing in public places (pubs, bars etc.), circuses or similar activities, fireworks, exhibitions, shows, etc.).
- Sworn Guards (private security guards)
- Shooting instructors
- Lost objects
- Management of work accidents
- Management of hospitality, work permits for foreigners or stateless persons
- Print shops and photographers
- Extraordinary sales
- Smoking
- Toys
- Valuable objects
- Weights and measures
- Net Weight
- Prices
- Games and gambling arcades
- Hotels
- Agritourisms (Tourism in which tourists board at farms or in rural villages and experience farming at close hand.)
- Receptive activities in general (hotels, camp sites, villages, restaurants etc.)

- Energy consumption
- Rest homes
- Bookmakers and lotto
- Caretaker/Janitor
- Copyrights
- Travel Agencies

**f) Health Police (Officer)**

- Medical prevention Service
- Monitoring compliance with the rules on hygiene in the workplace
- Veterinary Service (compulsory vaccinations and use of muzzle)
- Sanitation of all buildings and all public and private environments
- Food and drink hygiene
- compulsory health treatment for the mentally ill

**g) Commercial Police (local market place)**

- Wholesale
- Retailing
- Commerce on public areas
- Itinerant commerce
- Commerce "special forms"
- Salesman/agent
- T.V. commerce
- On-line commerce

**h) Morgue Police**

- Monitoring of funeral transport
- Monitoring of cemeteries

**i) Hunting – fishing Police**

- Issuing of hunting permits
- Preservation of protected or partially protected species (Protection of animals)
- Anti-poaching raids

## **j) Environmental Police**

- Pollution from waste
- Air, water, soil and subsoil pollution
- Air-form pollution
- Noise pollution
- Electromagnetic Pollution

## **k) Rural Police**

- Property and rural thefts
- Roads, ditches and canals
- Actions of land improvement
- Livestock diseases
- Organic farming and natural protected areas
- Forest Areas
- Plant Diseases
- Fight against insects harmful to agriculture

## **l) Police veterinary**

- Dog Registry
- Sale of plant protection chemical products
- Health & Hygiene authorisations
- Shipments of animals
- Slaughtering
- Transport of unprocessed substances for food industries
- Food sample Analysis
- Stables
- Keeping of livestock farms

## Judicial (Crime) Police Activities

In this category of activity are grouped all those processes implemented in collaboration with the judicial authorities for the prevention and repression of offences under the Penal Code and predominantly in the field of Building, Trade, Public Health & Hygiene, Road/Traffic Code, Drugs and Prostitution:

- Acquisition of offences (complaints, legal actions)
- Reporting of crimes to the Judicial authorities
- Actions for the prevention of further consequences
- Arrest, in the cases provided by law
- Accomplishing investigations delegated by the A.G. (Judicial authorities)
- Functions of P.M. (Public prosecutor)

### **Road Traffic Police Functions**

In this category of activity are grouped all work processes relating to applying Road Traffic Code penalties and fines, to providing support in occasion of great public happenings and, in particular, to implementing activities relevant to road safety. Such activities are performed in respect of the Road traffic Code and are promoted by the Proximity Police Forces in collaboration with the other Forces present on the territory:

- Collect of data on the phenomena
- Monitoring and case analysis
- Programming of actions of prevention (planning, operational, technological and infrastructural)
- Ascertaining of violations relating to road traffic
- Survey of road accidents and processing of all related documents (paper work)
- Survey of public property - road related damage
- On foot patrolling
- Traffic regulation
- Measurement, by means of appropriate instruments, of vehicle speed
- Preparation of regulatory Ordinances for road traffic circulation
- Temporary Permits
- Escort services to exceptional transports
- Call Centre
- Management of operations room
- Temporary Permits and authorizations
- Measures for road events
- Permits for pastoral transit (cows, sheep etc.) on roads
- Parking permit for disabled
- Verbalization - management of administrative proceedings related to administrative penalties and fines

- Verbalization - management of disputes
- Verbalization - management of roles
- Census of the vertical road signs, proposals and purchases to optimize the circulation of road traffic
- Issue measures for the installation of road signs of advice
- Granting of access road to property permits
- Granting of temporary road to property permits
- Road safety education in schools

### **Proximity Police functions**

In this category of activity are grouped all work processes relating to public relations and to the planning and implementation of project initiatives in the field of Urban Security, understood as a modern right of all citizen, carried out in collaboration with other Forces on the territory.

Examples of such services are:

- Protection of children and of those who are marginalized
- Supervision phenomena of urban decay

However, by observing these particular processes we can see that, rather than representing an independent element of the complex system of activities implemented by the Local police, they represent a set of operational modalities guided by the logic of participation and inclusion of the "outsiders" (citizens, victims, institutions) in the organizational and operational choices made in order to be able to carry out the other types of services too.

### **3. Model of the Proximity police operator's distinctive competences**

In defining the theoretical framework of reference for designing training processes one often encounters the distinction between three types of knowledge:

- *To know* (codified knowledge covering disciplines studied by communities of researchers and experts);
- *To know how to do* (operational and procedural knowledge, practical skills, specific professional experience, capability of dealing with problems at work);

- *To know how to be* (ability to understand the context in which one works, to manage interactions with other social actors in the context, to adopt appropriate behaviour).

The ability of a Proximity police operator is not only based on the (necessary) knowledge of rules and operating procedures, but on the ability to adopt strategies of action which require complex cognitive abilities (the result of experience, capacity for critical reflection on experiences made, intuition, understanding the specificity of the contexts, etc.) not easy to verbalize and transmit to others.

For “competence” is intended the ability of individuals to combine, autonomously, tacitly or explicitly and in a particular context, the various elements of knowledge and skills that they possess.

By “professional competence” is intended all the skills and knowledge useful to conduct a profession. Autonomy, is a fundamental factor of the concept as it provides the basis for distinguishing between the different levels of competence. Acquiring a certain level of competence can be regarded as the ability of an individual in using possessed knowledge, skills and expertise according to the required variables found in a context or in a particular situation.

In other words, the ability of an individual to address complexity, unpredictability and change, defines / determines his/her level of competence.

Competence includes:

- *Cognitive competence* - also includes the use of theory and concepts, as well as informal and tacit knowledge acquired through experience;
- *Functional competence* (know-how to do) intending those things that a person should be able to do when placed in a given work context (learning or social activity);
- *Personal competence* which includes knowing how to behave in a specific situation;

- *Competence and Ethics* involving the possession of certain personal and professional qualities;
- *Basic skills*, all the possessed knowledge (and the ability to use it) which represents the minimum basis for access to employment and the requirement for access to any further training;
- *Cross competence*, which comes into play in different work situations and allows the subject to transform knowledge into effective professional behaviour in a specific contexts;
- *Technical, professional competence*, made up of knowledge and techniques related to the activities required by work processes in different professional fields.

As part of our analysis, it was considered appropriate to focus attention on two categories of competence, the technical-professional one and the relational one, which in general can define the Proximity operator's profile irrespective of the different socio-cultural characteristics in which the project-partner countries operate.

### **3.1 Technical competences**

In this particular category we find all the knowledge (know-how) and skills related to the proximity operator's main concerns generally consisting in the management of acceptance and inclusion services which introduce citizens to functions of coordination with other institutional operators and not in creating mere networks of protection.

In such sense it is possible to state that the distinctive technical skills of the Proximity operator, in general, combine and support those typical techniques of the proximity policeman belonging to the area of legal competences, to the awareness of typical criminal phenomena of a context (sociological) and to the psychological ones necessary to better combat deviant behaviour and to deal with victims and disadvantaged persons.

In particular, however, it seems that the proximity operator necessitates a managerial programming capacity both for better defining specific activity and work plans that define the content of proximity services, and for managing

border relations and the coordination (network planning and management) with all the other actors of the network through which security conditions must be implemented to guarantee the community quality of life.

### **3.2 Relational competences**

Belonging to this category are all those skills relating to the function of reception and inclusion of disadvantaged citizens and the management of conflicts which may indicate a situation of deviant behaviour against a victim. This expertise is of the psycho-attitudinal and relational kind, connected to the ability to intervene in a situation of conflict or potential conflict to eliminate or contain the triggering factors of deviant or hostile behaviour. In other situations, the ability to listen, dialogue, communicate may instead be functional for the implementation of initiatives aiming to include subjects in social and institutional activities, thus allowing the proximity operator to directly contribute to the creation of those perceptions of safety that define the quality of life level in a community.

It is obvious that these skills and abilities strictly depend on the social context from which they are acquired and in which they are applied. However, among these competences, the ability to diagnose the characteristics of a relational and hostile event, to listen, to communicate and to manage aggressiveness and conflict appears to be outstanding.